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VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA, DAKOTAS CELEBRATES 80 YEARS

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I rise today to congratulate the Volunteers of America, Dakotas in South Dakota, which celebrated its 80th anniversary celebration in August, 2003.

Volunteers of America, Dakotas is one of over forty affiliates making up a national network of nonprofit, spiritually based organizations providing local human service programs and creating opportunities for individual and community involvement. Nationally, Volunteers of America employs more than 11,000 people and each year more than 1.5 million people feel the helping hand of this organization.

Began in the early 1920s, Volunteers of America, Sioux Falls was started as a prison ministry by Frank and Emma Tremont. However, the concerns of the couple were expanded when, during World War I, men went to war and women went to work, and childcare became a pressing need. In response, the organization opened a childcare center and soup kitchen. Over the years, the soup kitchen and prison ministry faded away, but quality childcare remained a service priority. It was the recent merger of this organization with another group, Turning Point, that formed Volunteers of America, Dakotas. Started as Project Threshold on September 16, 1972, Turning Point's original vision was a home for delinquent and runaway girls. Over its next 20 years, Project Threshold became a widely recognized leader in adolescent issues, treatment, and prevention services. Together, these two associations are now assisting more than 290 children each day.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge all of the Volunteers of America-Dakotas Centers in South Dakota, including the Bollinger Center, Joe Foss School, Whittier Middle School, Thrift Store, and other Centers in Sioux Falls, SD; the Native Hope Center in Sisseton, SD; and the Volunteers of Americas, Dakotas Center in Aberdeen, SD. Headquartered in Sioux Falls, Volunteers of America, Dakotas serves over 12,000 individuals of all ages each year. Their mission, which is to assist people of all ages in stepping toward a brighter future, is one that all South Dakotans should strive to live by.

I am proud to have this opportunity to honor the Volunteers of America-Dakotas for its 80 years of outstanding service. People of all ages need to think more about how we, as individual citizens, can work together at the local level to ensure the health and vitality of our towns and neighborhoods. I strongly commend the hard work and dedication of these Centers, and I am very pleased that their efforts are being publicly honored and celebrated.

It is with great honor that I share their impressive accomplishments with my colleagues.●

IN TRIBUTE TO JOHN MCKISSICK'S 500TH FOOTBALL WIN

● Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, on Friday night, John McKissick, of Summerville, SC, won his 500th victory as the head coach of the Summerville Green Wave high school football team, and this Senator rises to congratulate this towering giant of coaches.

I want to put this in perspective. That is almost 100 more victories than Eddie Robinson, the winningest coach ever in college football, had at Grambling and Leland. That is 170 more victories than Don Shula, the winningest coach ever in the NFL had with the Miami Dolphins and Baltimore Colts. This is a record that not Bear Bryant, not Woody Hayes, not Tom Landry, not Vince Lombardi, not any coach—pro, college, or high school has ever come close to ever seeing.

He started coaching in 1952, 2 years before Strom Thurmond entered the Senate, 14 years before I came, and now he'll outlast us both. In 5 decades at Summerville High School, he has 10 State championships and 26 regional titles under his belt; and many of the 3,000 teenagers he has coached went on to win scholarships at colleges across the country. In this time, he has had only two losing seasons, and he has never missed a game. Most of all, he has kept his priorities straight: education first, football second.

In my part of the country, John McKissick is a legend. I know all my football-fanatic colleagues join me in saying to John: you're a national legend, too. You have done more for the sport of high school football than any person in the country.●

HONORING LAIRD LARSON

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to publicly commend Laird Larson, a farmer near Clark, SD, on his selection as one of South Dakota State University's Eminent Farmers for 2003.

The Eminent Farmer and Homemaker Program, which has honored nominees since 1927, seeks farmers who have not only made significant contributions to their community, State and Nation, but have also given unselfishly of their talent, time and leadership to public programs, educational institutions, and church.

Laird has earned the respect and admiration of all those who have had the opportunity to work with him. His love for South Dakota and passion for agriculture set him apart from other outstanding farmers in the state. Laird's friendly demeanor and wealth of knowledge have helped him develop close relationships in various agriculture groups, including the South Dakota Crop Improvement Association, Northeast Research Farm Advisory Board, and South Dakota FFE Founda-

tion Board. Laird has also worked to raise funds for renovation South Dakota State University greenhouses and is currently working to develop a seed science center at South Dakota State University.

Americans are the envy of the world because we enjoy the most affordable and the safest food, spending only 10 percent of our household income on groceries. Agricultural producers in the United States must cope with the unpredictability of the weather, markets, and government policy, yet time and time again they are the most productive and efficient in the entire world. Farming and ranching families provide immeasurable contributions to quality of life, economic development, and the culture of rural America. Farmers and ranchers are the backbone of South Dakota's economy and should be commended for what they do.

This prestigious honor is a reflection of Laird's extraordinary success as a farmer, as well as his commitment to conservation, and contributions to the community. I am pleased that his agricultural leadership is being publicly recognized, and that his achievements will serve as a model for outstanding agricultural producers throughout the State to emulate. It is with great honor that I share his impressive achievements with my colleagues.●

TRIBUTE TO JAMES D. BENNETT, JR.

● Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to James D. Bennett, Jr., an outstanding public servant who is retiring after a distinguished career spanning more than 34 years as a firefighter in the capital city of Providence, RI.

James Bennett began his career as a Providence firefighter in August of 1968, quickly rising through the ranks becoming lieutenant in December of 1977, captain in February of 1984, and ultimately he was promoted to the coveted rank of battalion chief in April of 1986.

Chief Bennett's illustrious career has been marked with a special dedication to his brethren firefighters, and to seeking out leadership opportunities and specialized training for himself and the department. He completed numerous Federal, State, municipal and professional association training programs, courses and workshops on fire and safety issues. A member of the Fire Department Safety Officers Association and International Association of Fire Chiefs, he served from 1977 to 1982 as president Providence Local 99 of the International Brotherhood of Firefighters.

As a community and as a Nation, it is most fitting that we pause to reflect upon the contribution of those in our society from whom we ask so much. With selflessness, dedication and great personal sacrifice firefighters answer the call each and every day, putting themselves in harm's way to protect

and defend lives and property of our citizens. With courage, compassion and devotion to duty they epitomize the phrase "public servant." Indeed, I am honored to humbly recognize this noble profession and this outstanding individual, Chief James Bennett, on the occasion of his retirement.

I ask that you join me in paying tribute to Chief Bennett on this milestone and ask that you also recognize his devoted wife Kaiji who this June retired from her own career as an elementary school secretary after many years of loyal service. As a grateful community we recognize the immense contributions made by people like James and Kaija Bennett to the cherished quality of life in this great Nation. Please join me and the Bennett's wonderful daughters, Kerrie and Stacie, their many friends and colleagues in this much deserved retirement celebration.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MEASURES REFERRED—on September 11, 2003

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 911. An act to authorize the establishment of a memorial to victims who died as a result of terrorist acts against the United States or its people, at home or abroad; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1538. An act to posthumously award congressional gold medals to government workers and others who responded to the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and perished and to people aboard United Airlines Flight 93 who helped resist the hijackers and caused the plane to crash, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the Spirit of America, recognizing the tragic events of September 11, 2001, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 2433. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide veterans who participated in certain Department of Defense chemical and biological warfare testing with health care for their illness without requirement for proof of service-connection; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 2595. An act to restore the operation of the Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program during fiscal year 2003 to the scope of that program as in effect on September 30, 2002; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 2622. An act to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act, to prevent identity theft, improve resolution of consumer disputes, improve the accuracy of consumer records, make improvements in the use of, and consumer access to, credit information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURE HELD AT THE DESK

The following concurrent resolution was ordered held at the desk by unanimous consent:

S. Con. Res. 68. Concurrent resolution honoring the life of Johnny Cash.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-258. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of California relative to antiterrorism funding; to the Committee on Appropriations.

POM-259. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Legislature of the State of New Jersey relative to increasing the minimum allotment for the Food Stamp Program; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

POM-260. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Legislature of the State of Michigan relative to stronger protections for Lake St. Clair, the Heart of the Great Lakes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

POM-261. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Texas relative to the Protect Children from E-Mail Smut Act of 2001; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

POM-262. A concurrent resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of New Hampshire relative to the Telemarketing Sales Rule and the Know Your Caller Act of 2001; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

POM-263. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Texas relative to reopening La Linda Bridge as a border crossing; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

POM-264. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania relative to the history of a slave quarters located on the site of the planned Liberty Bell Pavilion; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

POM-265. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of Michigan relative to legislation that would ban bear baiting on Federal lands; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

POM-266. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania relative to nuclear power; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

POM-267. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania relative to Pennsylvania's veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

POM-268. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania relative to the Second Regiment United States Sharpshooters, Company C, during the Civil War; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

POM-258. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of California relative to antiterrorism funding; to the Committee on Appropriations.

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 31

Whereas, The heinous terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, have deeply impacted the fabric of American life, provided a wakeup call to every American's awareness of the nation's vulnerability to terrorists attacks, and changed Americans' lives forever; and

Whereas, Californians are gravely concerned about the continued threat of violence and their own personal safety; and

Whereas, The takeover of airplane flights by unconscionable terrorists has increased the need for security by state and local governments at all airports and public facilities, including water systems, hospitals, bridges, and dams; and

Whereas, Recent horrific incidents of sending anthrax through the mail, other threats of bioterrorism, and hoaxes have increased demands upon public services, including public health departments and laboratories, public safety and fire protection agencies, hospitals, and emergency rooms, and state and local emergency response agencies; and

Whereas, City and county governments have experienced an increased awareness and demand from the general public for more public services in the area of public health and safety; and

Whereas, Cities and counties have appropriated millions of dollars for increased response and preparedness for potential terrorist threats and anticipate the need for additional funds to continue these efforts; and

Whereas, In this period of economic uncertainty and unprecedented need for enhanced local public safety and health services, cities and counties cannot afford these increased costs of security without additional funding; and

Whereas, There may be continued terrorism activities in California. For example, in San Diego County investigations revealed that some of the hijackers of September 11, 2001, were training in San Diego training facilities in preparation for the attacks; and

Whereas, Public safety officials require specialized training at all levels and local governments have seen an increased demand for additional personnel to effectively protect and serve citizens in the event of a major local incident; and

Whereas, Hazardous material teams lack the specialized equipment and protective gear to deal with bioterrorism and new public health threats; and

Whereas, Due to the continued bioterrorism threats and hoaxes, public health departments need additional staff to increase their surveillance activities for the identification of biological and chemical threats at the earliest possible stage; and

Whereas, Local health departments are the early warning system in the defense against bioterrorism; local health departments rely on strong linkages with other county agencies including emergency medical services, hospitals, county outpatient services, laboratories, mental health departments, and environmental health agencies in preparing for and responding to disasters; and

Whereas, The budgets of many public health departments have been neglected for several years, and in order to assure an adequate response, if necessary, to any potential bioterrorism threat, public health infrastructure needs significant investment of state and federal resources. For example, Orange County has identified the need for \$2.1 million for public health infrastructure and training in order for their public health system to respond to a public health crisis; and